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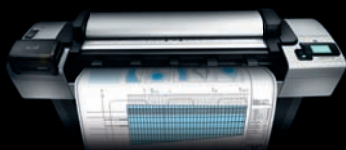
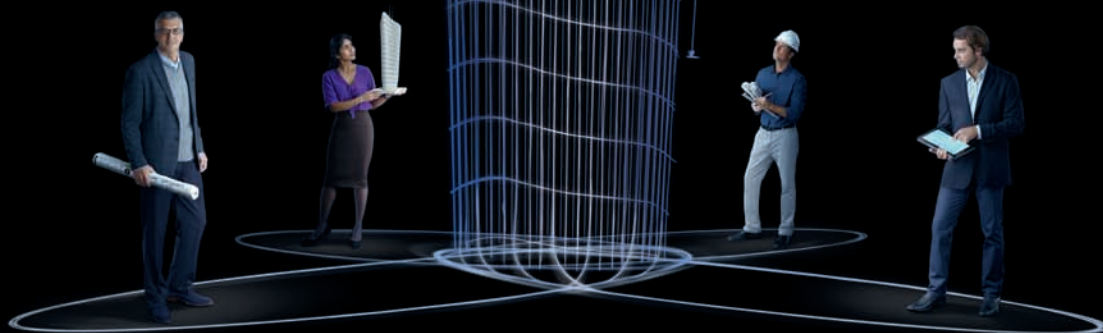
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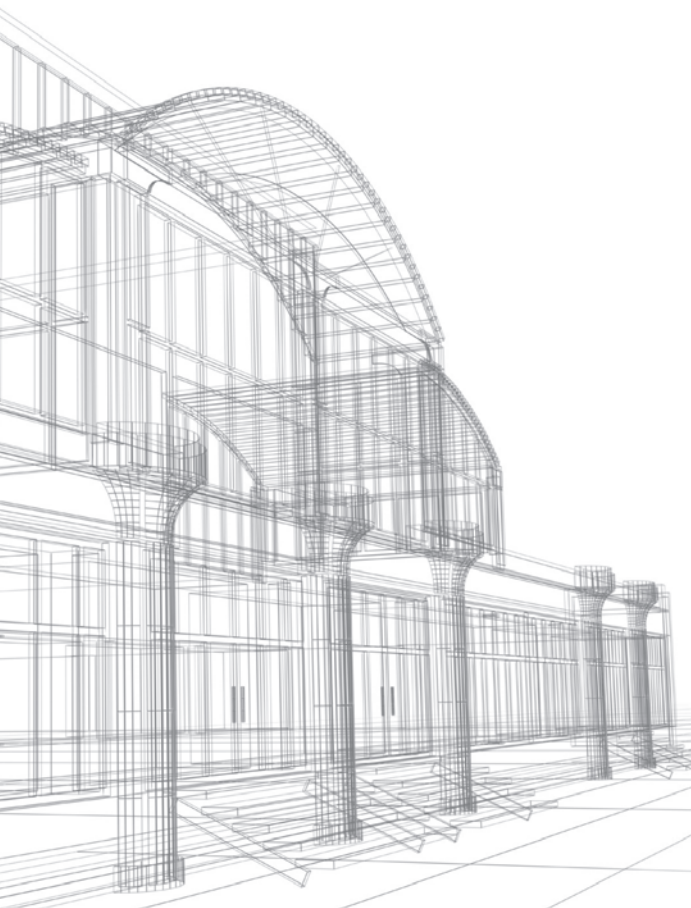
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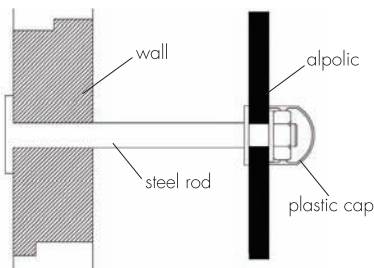
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DODY KALA/DOMINION MODERN



CANADIAN ARCHITECT

FEBRUARY 2011, V.56 N.02

THE NATIONAL REVIEW OF DESIGN AND PRACTICE/
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COVER TIFF BELL LIGHTBOX IN TORONTO BY KUWABARA PAYNE MCKENNA BLUMBERG ARCHITECTS AND KIRKOR ARCHITECTS. PHOTO BY MARIS MEZULIS.

OF CRITICAL RELEVANCE

Architects are becoming increasingly comfortable with abandoning the burdens of criticality in architectural theory, instead favouring approaches to design practice that are grounded in collaboration and making. Has the allure of opaque architectural theory been replaced by an appetite for honing skills that improve our ability to innovate?

For many years, the academy has been promoting a sense of criticality in architecture, yet there is an indication that this trend is breaking down. Nearly 10 years ago, Sarah Whiting, the current dean of the Rice School of Architecture, began to speak about “projective architecture” as a reaction to a formulaic method of criticism promulgated by theoreticians like K. Michael Hays and architect-iconoclast Peter Eisenman. In 2002, Whiting, along with Robert Somol, published an essay entitled “Notes Around the Doppler Effect and Other Moods of Modernism” in which they write, “So when architects engage topics that are seemingly outside of architecture’s historically defined scope—questions of economics or civic politics, for example—they don’t engage those topics as experts on economics or civic politics, but, rather, as experts on design and how design may affect economics of politics.” For Whiting, it is important that she not be misunderstood as being “post-critical” but would prefer that we use our intellectual and critical capacities as architects to remain relevant in contemporary society.

As a form of a rebuttal to Whiting and other leading academics such as Michael Speaks who decry the theoretical stagnation in contemporary academia, George Baird, the Toronto-based architect, educator and 2010 RAIC Gold Medalist, published an essay in late 2004 entitled “Criticality and Its Discontents.” One can sympathize with Baird’s fear that the “putatively ‘projective’ forms of practice being advocated by the critics of criticality” have yet to offer a viable alternative to well-entrenched critical approaches to architecture. Without criticality, Baird feels that “architecture could all too easily find itself conceptually and ethically adrift.” In the January 2011 issue of *Architectural Record*, Baird reiterated his concerns regarding today’s architect developing an “impatience with dwelling on critical and theoretical concerns—as opposed to considerations having to do with architectural practice,” adding that “the new generation’s emphasis on pragmatic, open-ended architectural concerns could lead to a certain amorality in outlook.” If this is true, then why aren’t we dusting off our books by Italian historian and critic Manfredo Tafuri, French philosopher

Jacques Derrida, or American literary critic Fredric Jameson to solve the design problems of today?

Is our profession heading for a disaster as a result of shifting away from tired approaches to critical thinking? Bruce Mau doesn’t think so. In fact, his essay entitled “You Can Do Better” published in January 2011’s *Architect* magazine asserts that our obsession with cynicism, navel-gazing and self-alienation is a much bigger issue threatening the profession today. To Mau, “Architecture is largely irrelevant to the great mass of the world’s population because architects have chosen to be [irrelevant].” Furthermore, “If you can’t tell the difference between critical and negative, and have conflated the two and built a practice around ‘challenging’ this or that, and are wondering why people aren’t interested—don’t come crying to me.”

While many traditionally minded North American architecture schools continue to disseminate old-fashioned architectural theory, emerging design schools prefer to focus on establishing valuable partnerships to make design relevant and essential to society. Moreover, the practical benefits of rapidly evolving technologies that facilitate cheap and efficient global communication and collaborative opportunities have broadened the relevancy and potential of today’s graduate architects, allowing them to build worthwhile projects in Africa or establish successful global entrepreneurship. Certainly, many of these initiatives cannot be characterized as being “conceptually and ethically adrift.”

New forms of design education are certainly gaining ground. Stanford University’s d.school, the Danish Design School, the Singapore University of Technology and Design, and the Strelka Institute for Media, Architecture and Design in Moscow are all aggressively seeking global design talent, and most interestingly, graduates of other schools who are disappointed with traditional design training. The Ontario College of Art and Design (OCAD) offers degrees such as a Master of Design in Inclusive Design, and a Master of Design in Strategic Foresight and Innovation—both of which intend to offer serious challenges to schools teaching old-fashioned architectural theory.

Life passes you by when you waste time theorizing about it. The real possibilities that the next generation of architects can offer is to capitalize on the design-related opportunities of our time and do what Mau suggested in his essay—“get in on the action and be part of this new world of invention and beauty!”

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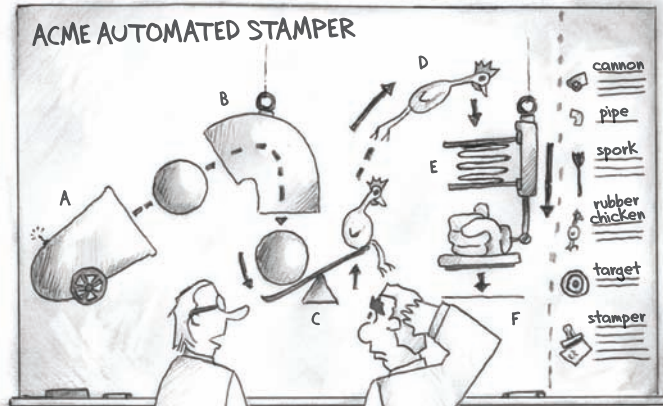
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PROJECTS

Quadrangle Architects unveils Ontario's next generation of highway service centres.

Quadrangle Architects celebrates the opening of several new, modern highway service centres along Ontario's Highways 400 and 401. Seven out of the 20 service centres have been completed. The inspiration for the Ontario Highway Service Centres is rooted in the imagery of rock outcroppings in Ontario's landscape. Each centre's unique locality is represented through mounted screens in the local seating area which showcase picturesque regional images. Digital media will also promote local attractions and events. The designs for all three sizes of centres incorporate three distinct elements—a glass atrium with sloped glass walls covered by a sloped metal roof; traditional indigenous stone walls; and wood trellises and canopies. To make these centres distinctive from other highway service centres in Canada, Quadrangle incorporated a broad range of accessibility and universal design measures in the new facilities to accommodate all visitors of varying abilities. Glazed doors and sidelights are clearly identified with custom-designed high-contrast visibility strips to cater to people of all heights. To avoid trip hazards, there are no stairs in any of the centres. To enhance mobility, all corridors are a minimum of 1,370mm wide and there are turning areas with a 2,000mm diameter for people using wheelchairs, scooters or other assistive devices. All service counters are designed with one 1,100mm-wide counter at a height useable by persons in wheelchairs. Mosaic tiles of a contrasting colour serve as a detectable warning surface at the sloped glazing as well as to indicate changes in direction. Universally accessible drinking fountains and telephones are also provided. Telephones include a teletypewriter (TTY), a longer cord and an added shelf to support a telecommunications device (TTD) for the deaf. High-contrast colours were also used to define the boundary between the wall and the floor. Signage by Bruce Mau Design employs sans-serif font with simple uncluttered language and graphics, and has sharp colour contrast for easier reading as well as universal cultural symbols, raised tactile lettering and Braille.

www.quadrangle.ca

AWARDS

Winners of the 2011 OAQ Awards of Excellence in Architecture announced.

The winners of the 2011 Ordre des architectes du Québec (OAQ) Awards of Excellence in Architecture were recently announced. In the Institutional Category (\$5M or more), Conservatoire de mu-



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sique et d'art dramatique de Montréal in Montreal by Saia Barbarese Topouzanov architects claimed first prize. In the Cultural Category (\$2M or more), first prize was given to Théâtre de Quat'sous in Montreal by Les architectes FABG (Brodeur, Gauthier, Lavoie, architectes). In the Industrial Category (\$5M or more), the Extension of the Centre de formation professionnelle Gabriel-Rousseau in Lévis by a consortium of architects—Anne Carrier architect + Onil Poulin architect took first prize. In the Commercial Category (under \$2M), first prize was awarded to Vitaines habitées—Quartier des spectacles in Montreal by Daoust Lestage Inc. architecture, urban design. In the Commercial Category (\$2M or more), Université de Sherbrooke, new Longueuil campus in Longueuil by a consortium of architects—Marosi + Troy architects, Jodoin Lamarre Pratte and associates architects, Labbé architect claimed first prize. And in the Residential Category (Single Family), first prize was given to La Cornette in Canton de Cleveland, Estrie by YH2, Yiakovakis Hamelin, architects. For more information and a complete list of winners and honourable mentions, please visit the website.

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COMPETITIONS

Edmonton Park Pavilion Architectural Design Competition.

Building on the legacy of Edmonton's historic parks pavilions, the City of Edmonton is sponsoring a design competition for five individual Parks Pavilions in five separate parks: Borden Park, Castle Downs Park, John Fry Sports Park, Mill Woods Sports Park, and Victoria Park. Each project will be judged independently. Individuals or teams are encouraged to join the competition

if they are eligible for registration with the Alberta Association of Architects. First- and second-place winners for each park will receive recognition and monetary awards for the work involved. The registration deadline is March 1, 2011, and the deadline for submissions is March 22, 2011.

www.edmonton.ca/DesignCompetition

Canadian Centre for Architecture Design Charrette winners announced.

This competition, entitled Alterotopia, was held under the auspices of the Canadian Centre for Architecture (CCA) and Montreal-based universities (Université de Montréal, UQAM and McGill University), in partnership with other Canadian universities, and challenged students and interns by inviting them to reflect on issues and problems in contemporary architecture around the theme of "making another city/stitching/connecting/sharing." Two first prizes were awarded to a team of students from Carleton University composed of Benoît Lagacé, Adam Johnston, Jessica MacDonald, Josh Armstrong and Cipriano Nolan, and to a team of two young UQAM graduate interns, Anik Poirier and Albane Guy. Students from the Université de Montréal, McGill University, Université Laval, UQAM, Carleton University, and Ryerson University had to pit their ingenuity against one another from November 4-7, 2010. Working in teams, they presented the jury with urban development proposals adapted to the borough of Montréal-Nord. With a distinct social and urban fabric, due as much to the ethnic and cultural diversity of its residents as to the obvious disconnect between the urban landscape and its boundaries, this northeastern part of the city—where small-scale elements seem to dominate—is home to the borough's

poorest households and is one of Montreal's most densely populated areas.

Coryn Kempster wins John Street Ideas Competition.

Urban Ballroom is Coryn Kempster's proposal for the square at the intersection of King and John Streets in Toronto, which aims to provide the neighbourhood and its visitors an exciting and playful multi-functional outdoor room. To allow for different scales of occupation, from an individual to a crowd, the space is furnished in distinct zones, which blend between one another and the city's sidewalks. The ceiling of Urban Ballroom is formed by a web of individually solar-powered globe lights which illuminate the space and provide spatial definition, compressing the square in the middle through a catenary bulge. The hardscaped ground lifts up subtly; its complementary curvature allows the individual to look over the crowd. The east and west ends of the plaza are occupied by balls of various diameters geometrically grouped into informal seating areas. Kempster is the grand prize winner, while Pete North has taken second prize with his proposal entitled Entertain Me. The three remaining finalists are: David Colussi for King Street Staircase; Rohan Almeida for King Street Terrace; and

Martin Gravel for Oracle Square.
www.torontoed.com/johnst

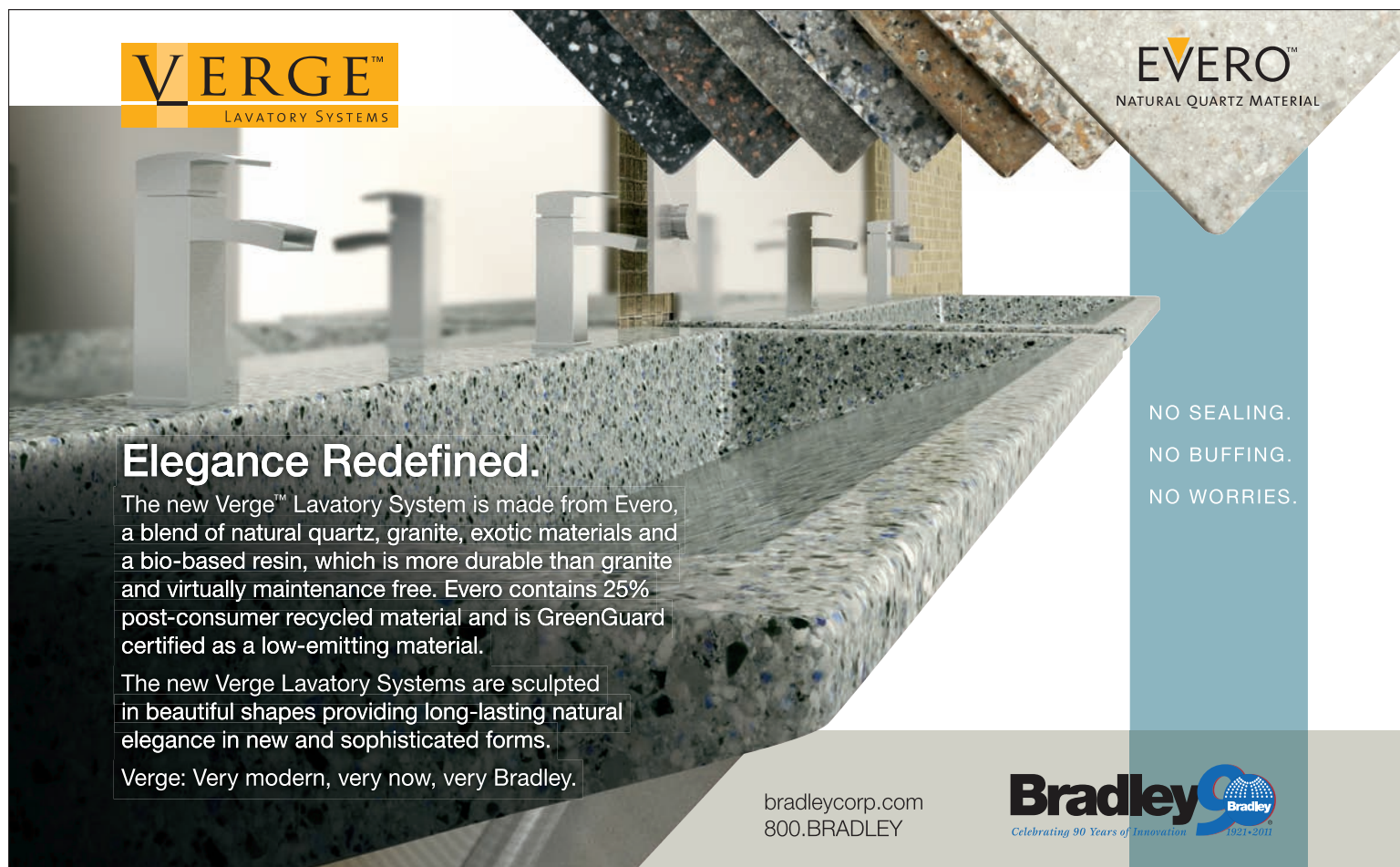
OCAD University appoints architect Will Alsop as Adjunct Professor.

The Faculty of Design at OCAD University announced that it has appointed internationally renowned architect Will Alsop, designer behind the Sharp Centre for Design at OCAD University, as an Adjunct Professor. His appointment commenced in November 2010 and will continue until 2013. In September 2011, Alsop will begin teaching an Architectural Design Studio course for upper-year undergraduate students, focusing on the local urban context. Alsop is one of the UK's most prominent architects and is a respected artist who has applied his bold and colourful approach to award-winning projects across the world. His stance is that art and architecture are inseparable disciplines and he actively promotes artistic contributions to the built environment. He is guided by the principle that architecture is both a vehicle and symbol of social change and renewal. Alsop has expertise across every sector, including transportation, health, education, retail, residential, office, public, hospitality, leisure and interiors, across the UK and internationally.

Sustainable Building Challenge call for poster presentations.

The Sustainable Building Challenge is an international co-operative process promoting innovative sustainable building design and seeking an improved understanding of building performance assessment tools from a national and international perspective. SB Challenge will form a key part of the Seventh World Sustainable Building Conference (SB11) to be held in Helsinki, Finland from October 18-21, 2011. Submissions are being solicited for poster projects to be displayed at SB11 to provide attendees with a more complete understanding of the progress of sustainable building in Canada and to enhance our country's participation in the conference. If you are a Canadian architect, engineer, building owner or commercial developer, you are invited to submit your most environmentally advanced project to be presented in poster format at the SB Challenge in Helsinki. Commercial, institutional and multi-unit residential building types from the public or private sector with a minimum size of 1,000 square metres will all be considered. The submission deadline is March 31, 2011, and an application fee of \$150 CDN is required for each submission.

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The Louis Bohème, one of Montreal's newest downtown projects, owes its strong urban presence first and foremost to an intelligent round of negotiations between Menkès Shooner Dagenais LeTourneux architectes and city planners. The outcome of these negotiations was such that the developer was able to propose a meaningful urban gesture that is responsive to the city—rather than just building another residential compound oblivious to its surroundings.

According to zoning regulations, the project was indeed slated to be a sturdy 14-floor structure with minimal open space at ground level. The real challenge—and major breakthrough—was to figure out another way of occupying the site. It was proposed to divide the project into two towers—one 13 storeys and the other 28 storeys—while maintaining a floor-to-area ratio of 12.0.

The lower tower was designed to occupy the part of the site closest to the newly completed Place des Spectacles on rue de Bleury, while the higher tower was built along boulevard de Maisonneuve. The former relates to fur industry manufacturing, which at one point was prevalent in this area of Montreal, while the latter corresponds to the string of office buildings located on either side of de Maisonneuve as one progresses towards the city's business centre.

Because of the building's L-shaped plan, residents were provided with a greater variety of views and orientations. Those living above the 15th floor of the de Maisonneuve tower were given a rare treat: in each elevator lobby, an opening focuses the view towards one of Old Montreal's true jewels, the 1920s Royal Bank Building with its pyramidal roof.

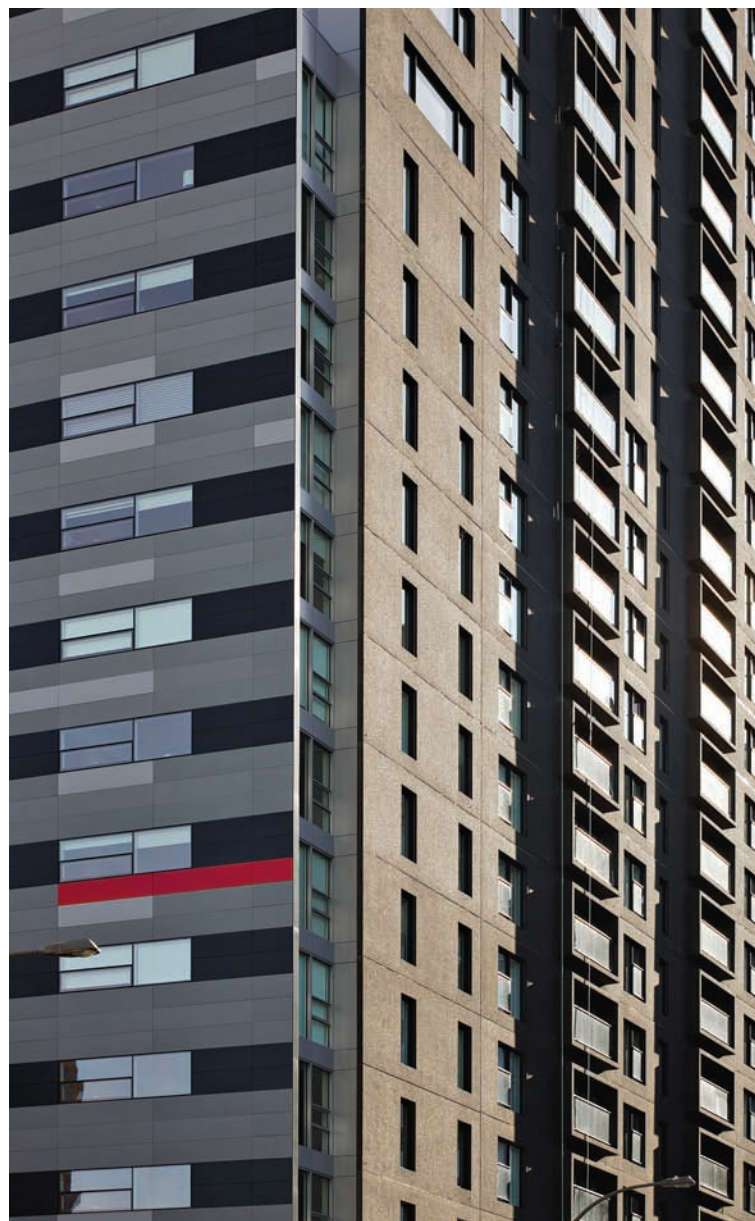
Freeing part of the site also provided the architects with an opportunity to create an open space on the south side of the complex, over the entrance leading to a six-level parking garage that contains 300 parking spaces. The outdoor garden, measuring 245 square metres, is accessible directly from the upper part of the main lobby where, aside from a few studio units, one finds a lounge/library space and an exercise area. The mere concept of a contemplative space, where tenants can read or just sit quietly, is one of the aspects of this project that reveals real estate developer Javier Planas's Spanish origin.

Planas moved to Montreal almost 20 years ago and received public acclaim for remodelling the 1908 Canadian National Express Building (designed by Hutchison and Wood) along rue McGill. Erected by the Grand Trunk Railway Company at a time when Montreal was a major North American transportation hub, the building is now known as the Hôtel St-Paul, the first boutique hotel that launched in Old Montreal.

Planas is the president of Iber Group, a Canadian company backed by Spanish investors while Iber Immobilier, the actual client for the project, is a real estate management fund created by Planas to tackle Louis Bohème, his first major residential project in Montreal. Construction of the project started in 2007 and ended in the summer of 2010.

By the time the building opened its doors, 98 percent of the units had been sold. Although the architectural team had much to do with this success, credit should also be given to mpm/innédesign, a firm responsible for the project's branding and marketing strategy. They also contributed to the choice of details, colours and materials for some of the interiors.

The 293 apartments vary in size from 58 to 150 square metres. Aimed at a middle-income buyer, the design is fairly standard, as all units are a single storey, accessible from a double-loaded corridor. The corner units, as one might expect, are the most interesting. That being said, one welcomes the fresh simplicity of the interior design, a relief in a market where ostenta-



OPPOSITE WITH VACANT LOTS IN THE FOREGROUND, THE NEW APARTMENT COMPLEX ASSERTS ITSELF IN THE DOWNTOWN MONTREAL CONTEXT. **TOP** A DETAIL OF THE FAÇADE REVEALS A CONSIDERABLE DEGREE OF ARTICULATION—A RED PANEL ACKNOWLEDGES EXISTING DATUM LINES OF NEARBY BUILDINGS. **ABOVE** THE INTERIOR COURTYARD PERMITS AMPLE DAYLIGHT TO PENETRATE THE INTERIOR SPACES OF THE BLOCK.

MSDI ARCHITECTES



tion is often mistaken for elegance.

Considerable attention was paid to the detailing of the elevations. The east façade, facing Place des Arts, is carefully crafted with a wall comprised of aluminum, zinc and steel panels assembled in a mosaic-like pattern. Sophisticated window elements with no apparent mullions were specifically designed for this project. Metallic modules are all the same height, slightly over half a metre, but they vary in length and hue—black, red, and dark and light grey. A distinct rhythm, reminiscent in certain ways of musical notation, was thus created on this façade, which acts as a backdrop for the Jazz Festival and other musical events that occur every summer in the streets surrounding the building.

In contrast to this façade is the stark north elevation parallel to boulevard de Maisonneuve, where the black granite aggregate added to the pre-fabricated concrete panels creates a striking and almost abstract effect, highly unusual for this type of building. Each of the building's two street façades expresses a distinct aspect of what Montreal is all about as a creative city. Only metres away from the major performance and visual arts cluster of Montreal, the Louis Bohème is also the portal to the city's business centre towards the west. The higher tower thus acts as a beacon that celebrates both the festive character of the city and its more serious professional aspect.

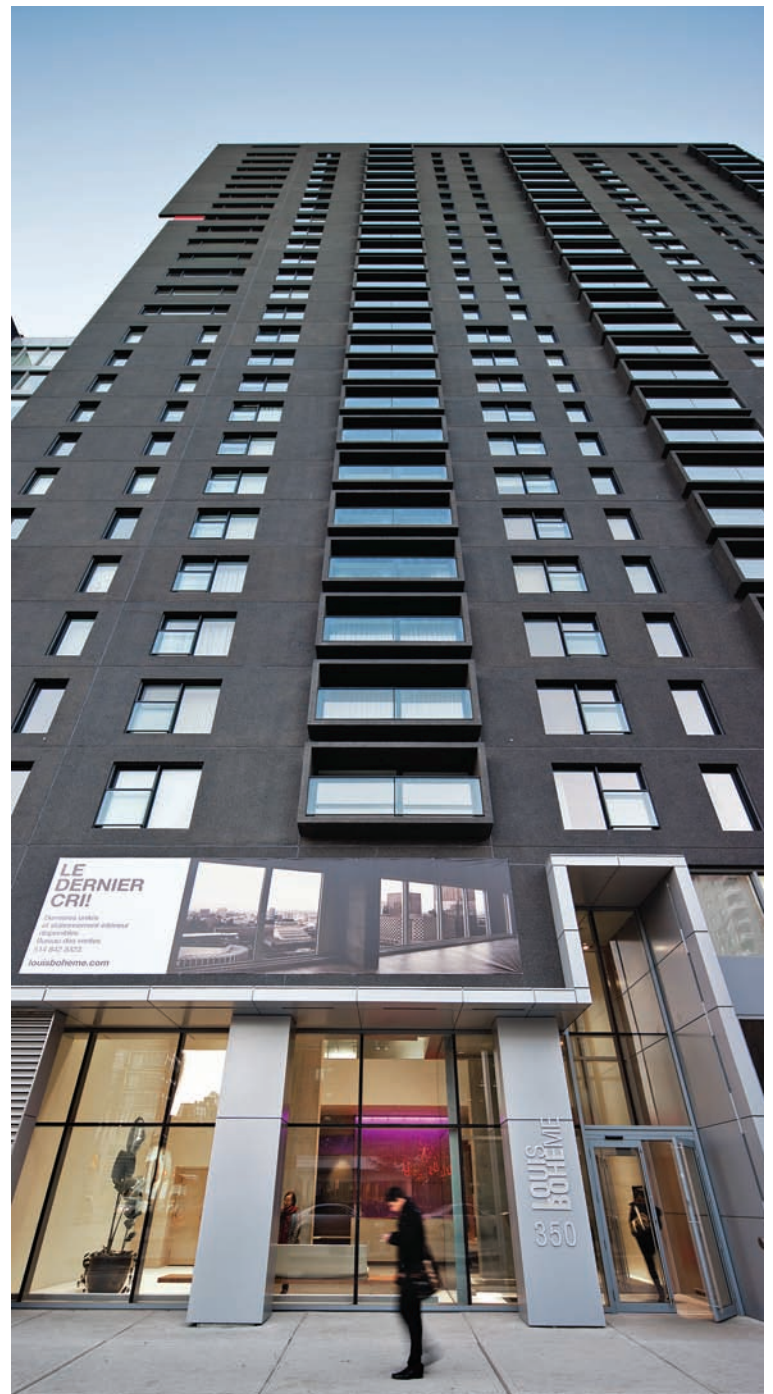
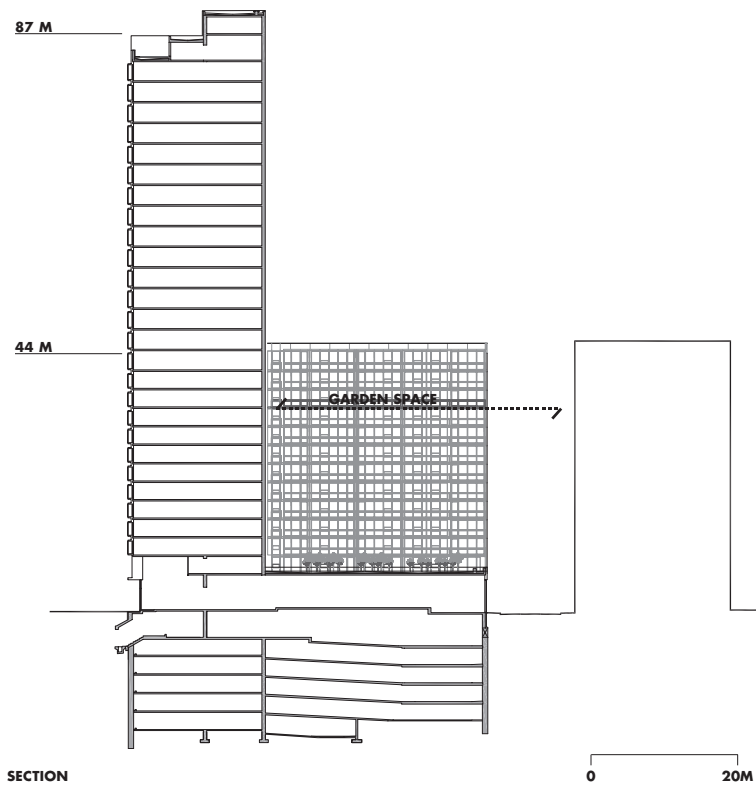
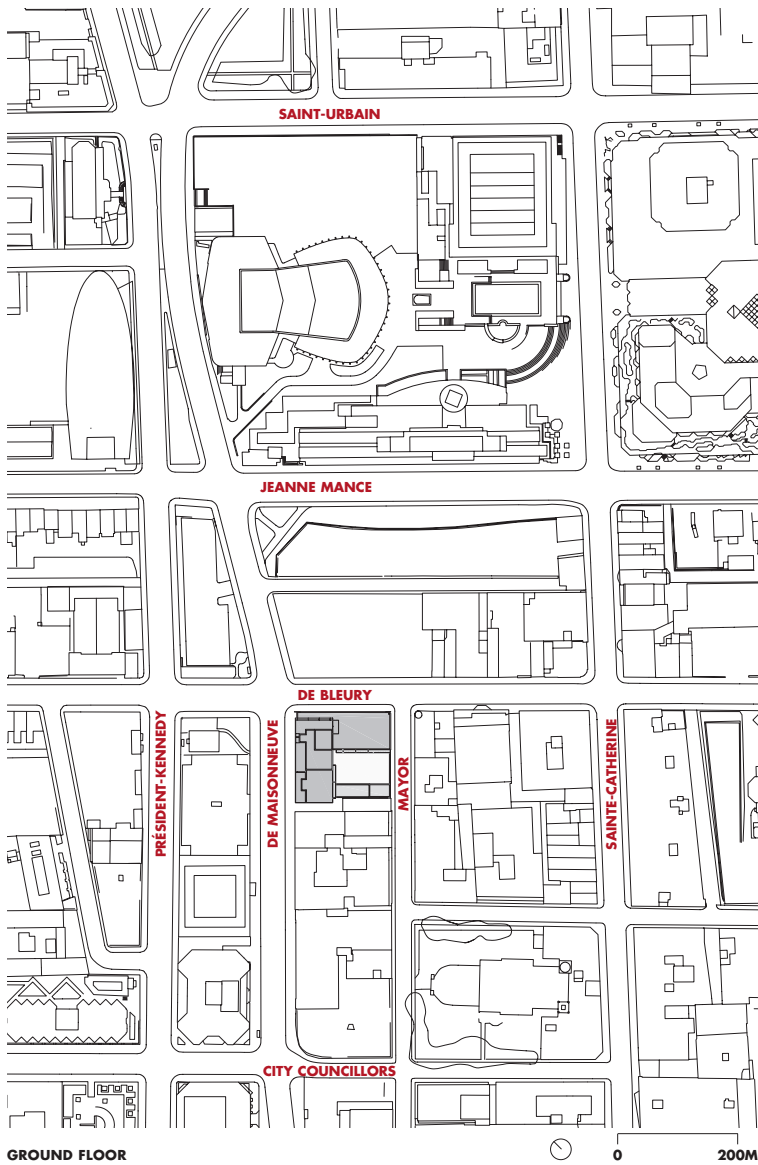
At the junction of the building's two wings is direct access to the Place des Arts metro station, itself connected through a series of passageways to Old Montreal, the Palais des congrès and Chinatown. Finally, the Louis

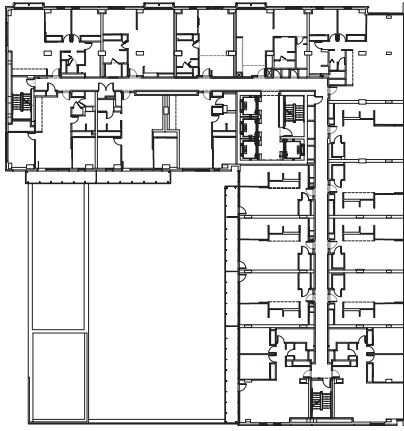
ABOVE, LEFT TO RIGHT A VIEW OF LOUIS BOHÈME, WALKING EAST ALONG RUE DE BLEURY; THE APARTMENT COMPLEX SEEN WHEN TRAVELLING SOUTH ALONG BOULEVARD DE MAISONNEUVE. **OPPOSITE, TOP TO BOTTOM** THE BUILDING'S ENTRANCE ON BOULEVARD DE MAISONNEUVE ADDRESSES THE STREET IN AN URBANE MANNER AS IF IT WAS A COMMERCIAL STOREFRONT; THE PLACE DES FESTIVALS—PART OF THE NEW QUARTIER DES SPECTACLES—HELPS DEFINE THE LOUIS BOHÈME IN AN INCREASINGLY ANIMATED AREA OF MONTREAL.

Bohème features a 1,500-square-metre commercial zone situated at ground level on either side of the residential area. The sparsely furnished lobby features a clever LED lighting system emanating a purple glow that creates an eerie feeling.

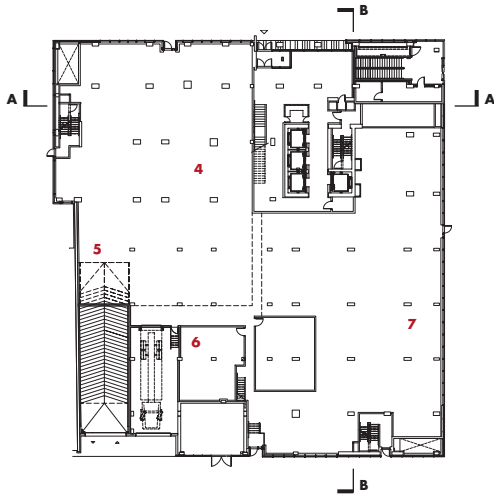
Despite the inevitable changes that take place in a project of such complexity, Menkès Shooner Dagenais LeTourneux architectes were able to stay on course throughout the design process, a feat largely attributed to a strong architectural and urban parti. They managed to incorporate whatever concessions that had to be made without compromising the essential conceptual underpinnings of their scheme.

Centrally located, the Louis Bohème fills one of Montreal's numerous downtown lots left vacant ever since the Drapeau era and its overambitious dreams. Although a number of towers have been built in the last half-century, few compare with I.M. Pei's Place Ville-Marie, Mies van der Rohe's Westmount Square, and Peter Dickinson's CIBC building. As an urban object, the Louis Bohème achieves a level of excellence that is respectful

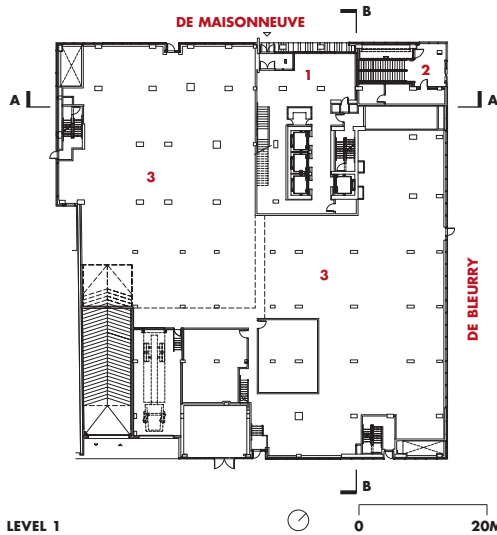




LEVELS 3 TO 13



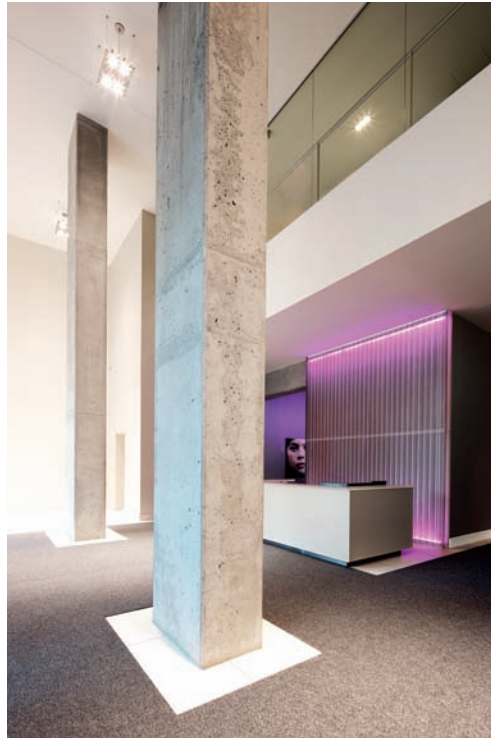
LEVEL 2



LEVEL 1

- 1 BUILDING LOBBY
- 2 PLACE-DES-ARTS METRO ENTRANCE
- 3 COMMERCIAL SPACE
- 4 LIBRARY/Common ROOM

- 5 FITNESS ROOM
- 6 GARDEN
- 7 UNIT C



MSDI ARCHITECTES



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT THE TWO-STOREY FRONT LOBBY CONVEYS A FEELING OF EXPANSIVENESS; LOUIS BOHÈME CAN BE SEEN IN THE DISTANCE, WITH PLACE DES ARTS BARELY VISIBLE ON THE LEFT; AN EXAMPLE OF ONE OF THE APARTMENT'S INTERIOR SPACES.

of the best Montreal has to offer in terms of modern heritage. This is no small accomplishment, and proof that urban gestures that engage in a dialogue with the city can be financially sustainable. **CA**

Odile Hénault is a Quebec-based architectural writer and is currently editing a forthcoming book on the work of Dan Hanganu to be published by TUNS Press.

CLIENT IBER IMMOBILIER
ARCHITECT TEAM JEAN-PIERRE LETOURNEUX, ANIK SHOONER, GAÉTAN ROY, ALAIN BOUDRIAS, AUDREY ARCHAMBAULT, CATHERINE BÉLANGER, JEAN-FRANÇOIS JODOIN, JEAN-FRANÇOIS MATHIEU, MACGREGOR WILSON, MARC-ANTOINE CHARTIER-PRIMEAU, PAOLO ZASSO, PIERRE-ALEXANDRE RHÉAUME, VINCENT LAUZON, ANDRÉA MACELVEE, BENOÎT DUPUIS, CLAUDIO NUNEZ
STRUCTURAL/CIVIL GÉNIVAR
MECHANICAL/ELECTRICAL DUPRAS LEDOUX INGÉNIEURS
INTERIORS INNÉ DESIGN
ELEVATORS JEAN-MARC GAGNON ET ASSOCIÉS
CONTRACTOR EBC INC.
AREA 45,000 M²
BUDGET \$60 M
COMPLETION AUGUST 2010

**DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE**

*P.O. Box 1000, 5410 Spring Garden Road
Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada B3J 2X4*

10 December 2010

*Faculty of Architecture
and Planning*

The School of Architecture at Dalhousie University in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada is looking for a new faculty member who will be central to our studio-based curriculum. Most faculty teach in studio and one other stream: Practice, Technology or Humanities. The School has a strong design orientation and includes undergraduate and graduate work semesters that integrate professional experience with academic courses. The School is in downtown Halifax, a harbour city of 360,000 and the metropolitan centre of Atlantic Canada. Dalhousie University (est. 1818) is the premier research institution in the region, serving 16,000 students. We offer an accredited graduate professional degree in architecture and an interdisciplinary Ph.D.

The School of Architecture invites applications for a teaching position in **architectural design**, with a clear academic and/or professional research focus. This is a full-time, tenure stream appointment at the level of Assistant Professor. The candidate will be expected to show evidence of an ability to teach core undergraduate courses both in a studio and in a lecture format, and to supervise graduate theses. In addition, she/he should be able to present a graduate studio and a graduate seminar to be developed in their area of research focus. All faculty collaborate with colleagues in curriculum development and work with students across the entire curriculum.

The successful candidate will have demonstrated achievement in the practice and teaching of architecture, and promise for excellence in design, teaching, and research. The successful candidate will have: (1) a professional degree in architecture, (2) either an advanced degree in a field related to the position or eligibility for architectural registration in Canada, and (3) knowledge of digital design media. The portfolio of work should demonstrate a creative integration of architectural design in teaching, in practice, and in an area of scholarship.

Applications must include: (a) a statement of teaching and research orientation; (b) a full *curriculum vitae* including address, telephone and email; (c) a portfolio including design work, teaching and publications; and (d) original letters of reference, sent under separate cover, from at least four referees (and their contact information if it is not evident in the letter). For best considerations, applications should be received by 15 March 2011. The process will continue until the position is filled.

All qualified candidates are encouraged to apply; however, Canadians and permanent residents will be given priority. Dalhousie University is an Employment Equity / Affirmative Action employer. We encourage applications from qualified Aboriginal people, persons with a disability, racially visible persons, and women.

Send application packages to:

Ted Cavanagh, Chair, Search Committee 2010/2011-1807
School of Architecture
Faculty of Architecture and Planning
Dalhousie University
P.O. Box 1000, 5410 Spring Garden Road
Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada B3J 2X4

More information about the School and its activities can be found at <archplan.dal.ca/positions>. General inquiries should be directed to Martha Barnstead, Administrative Secretary to the Dean of the Faculty of Architecture and Planning, Dalhousie University; e-mail <martha.barnstead@dal.ca>; telephone (902) 494-3210.

SEE THE LIGHT

A NEW HOME FOR THE TORONTO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL INCORPORATES A DIVERSE AND ENGAGING PROGRAM, INVIGORATING THE CITY'S BUSTLING ENTERTAINMENT DISTRICT.



PROJECT TIFF BELL LIGHTBOX, TORONTO, ONTARIO
ARCHITECTS KUWABARA PAYNE MCKENNA BLUMBERG ARCHITECTS, DESIGN ARCHITECTS/KIRKOR ARCHITECTS & PLANNERS, ARCHITECTS OF RECORD
TEXT LESLIE JEN
PHOTOS TOM ARBAN AND MARIS MEZULIS

Toronto is perhaps finally emerging from a prolonged adolescence towards something resembling a world-class city, the success of which is due largely to recent architectural transformations in the city's core. Landmarks such as the Art Gallery of Ontario, the Terrence Donnelly Centre for Cellular and Biomolecular Research, and the Royal Ontario Museum have achieved varying degrees of success and/or notoriety, but have nonetheless contributed to putting the city on the global map.

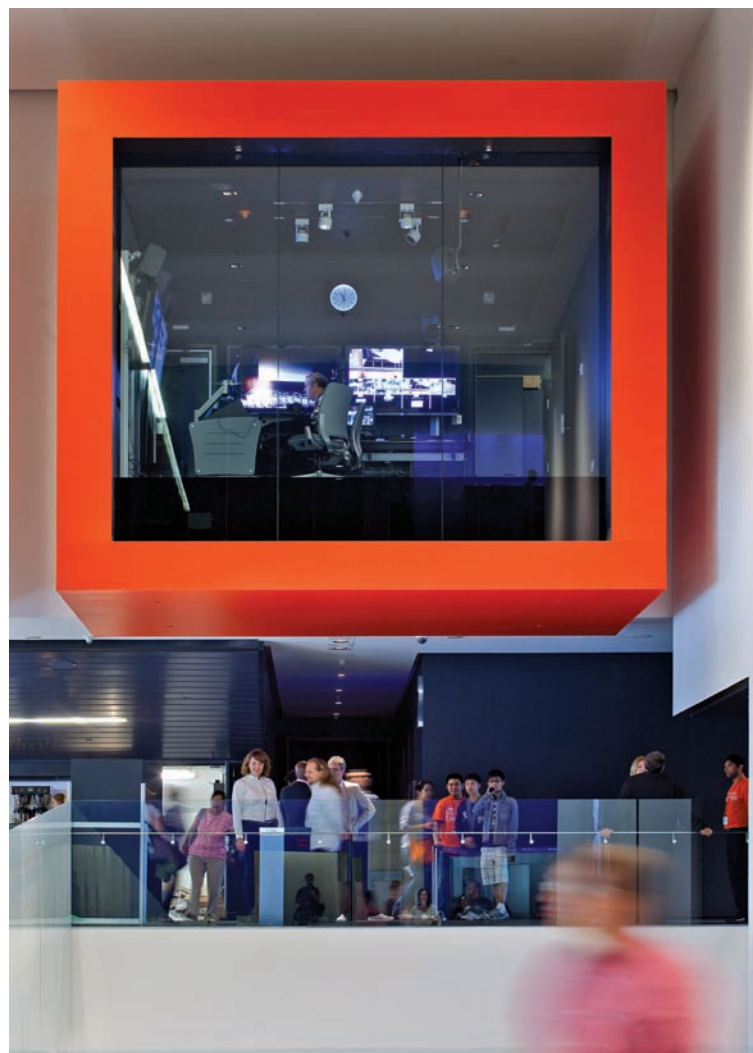
A recent addition to this growing list is the TIFF Bell Lightbox, a complex that is the result of many parties working in concert. Founded in 1976, the Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF) is an annual event which has been gaining increasing importance in the global film industry in recent years. TIFF staff had long been operating out of relatively dismal office space at Yonge and Carlton Streets for years, and was in desperate need of a new home. Several years ago, Hollywood film producer and director Ivan Reitman stepped in, and with his sisters Agi Mandel and Susan Michaels, donated the land on which the Lightbox now sits. Reitman's parents were Holocaust survivors from the former Czechoslovakia who immigrated to Canada in the 1950s, and a decade later, purchased Farb's Car Wash at the northwest corner of the King and John Street intersection. Another party eventually joined in the venture—The Daniels Corporation—who, along with the Reitman family, formed the King and John Festival Corporation (KJFC). The TIFF Group, along with KJFC, are the official developers of the project.

Kuwabara Payne McKenna Blumberg Architects (KPMB) won the design competition for the project in 2003, and they could not have been more familiar with the site, as their offices are located directly across the street in the Eclipse Whitewear Building. Principals Bruce Kuwabara and Shirley Blumberg have been in this very same location since the mid-1970s, when they both began their professional careers with architect Barton Myers, who then owned the building with former partner Jack Diamond. Kuwabara and Blumberg have witnessed the evolution of the neighbourhood practically every day for three and a half decades; what better design team to understand the urban context of the Lightbox?

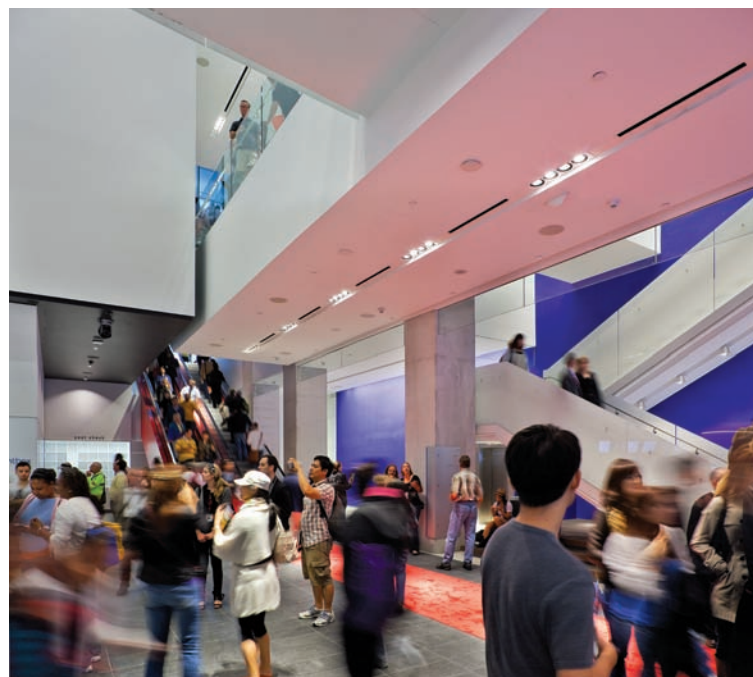
This prime piece of property is located in the heart of the the Entertainment District on the same stretch of King Street as the Royal Alexandra Theatre and the Princess of Wales Theatre, both owned by the legendary Mirvish family. King Street is a major east-west thoroughfare that runs through the city's financial heart and the Entertainment District, and continues westward to the evolving fantasy lifestyle nexus of sleek condominiums and boutique hotels clustered around King and Bathurst Streets. John Street was identified in 2009 by the City as a "cultural corridor," a phrase that the Entertainment District Business Improvement Association has capitalized on in attempts to beautify and pedestrianize the roughly seven-block-long north-south conduit that runs from Grange Park behind the Art Gallery of Ontario all the way down to Front Street.

Kuwabara maintains that there was no direct precedent for this type of project. Certainly, there are multiplex theatres around the world, art house theatres and film centres, but nothing with so broad a mixed-use program as this. Five cinemas, two galleries, two restaurants and a lounge, a gift shop, a film reference library, ample office and work space for 200 TIFF employees—are all combined with a 43-storey condominium tower. The residential component of the complex was primarily undertaken by Kirkor Architects & Planners, and the soaring tower rises from KPMB's five-storey podium base, devoted to TIFF and its accessory functions.

Led by design partner Kuwabara, partner in charge Blumberg, and project architect Matthew Wilson, the design team worked closely with TIFF CEO



TOM ARBAN



TOM ARBAN

OPPOSITE THE TIFF BELL LIGHTBOX IN ALL ITS NOCTURNAL GLORY. **TOP** VIEWERS GET A VOYEURISTIC GLIMPSE OF THE MASTER CONTROL ROOM HOVERING OVER THE CENTRAL ATRIUM. **ABOVE** ESCALATORS, STAIRS AND BRIDGES ARE IMMEDIATELY APPARENT ON THE GROUND FLOOR OF THE BUILDING—EXPLICIT AND STRETCHED CIRCULATION BECOMES A CINEMATIC DEVICE OF PROCESSION, MOVEMENT AND SPECTACLE.



and Director Piers Handling, Executive Director and Chief Operating Officer Michele Maheux, and Noah Cowan, Artistic Director of the TIFF Bell Lightbox, who were tireless in their efforts to realize the long-awaited project. Kuwabara and Blumberg also enthused about the participation of a team of prominent Canadian filmmakers that were brought in as consultants early on in the design process. Atom Egoyan, Patricia Rozema, Don McKellar and others were invited to offer their opinions on the facility, and provided valuable insights to the design team. Artist Margaret Priest was also invited to share her expertise, and brought with her an impressive skill set and knowledge of film which informed some of the design elements in

the building, including the choice of bold accent colours on the interior.

First impressions reveal the massing of the building to be on the bulky side, though this is perhaps unavoidable given the complex and extensive program. Kuwabara likens the project to “a mini-city of film,” in which the “architectural volumes of the five cinemas are expressed as black zinc-clad buildings within the building” that seem to float in the interior atrium. Blumberg adds that great efforts were made to express the parts of this program, such as the cinema volumes pushing through the façade, although this articulation could have been even more pronounced.

Reference to the medium of black and white film in this loft-like building



is made through material choice, colour selection, and of course, the presence of light, according to Kuwabara. A restrained colour palette is expressed through the ubiquity of white drywall, grey concrete columns and floors, frosted and clear glass, black zinc, and judiciously placed apertures for the transmission of natural and artificial light.

More convincing is the employment of cinematic devices of transparency and explicitly stretched circulation routes to provide as many vantage points as possible for viewing and being viewed; the spectator becomes a participant. A soaring three-storey central atrium allows glimpses of the upper floors from below as well as views from the second and third floors into the ground-floor foyer of those queuing for tickets and milling about; glazed balustrades and walls maximize sightlines. In addition to the escalators that lead up to the second and third floors, visitors also have the option of taking the stairs to the second-floor theatres, restaurant and lounge. Blumberg says, "It's important to provide alternate means of access upstairs, and people do use the stair." Frosted glass balustrades define a second-floor bridge that crosses the atrium, providing yet another expression of the cinematic spectacle of procession and movement. And hovering at the west end of the atrium on the third floor is the most captivating feature, the master control room. A bright red box that opens up to the public with a large window wall, it permits a voyeuristic and privileged view of where and how all the magic happens. Here, technicians coordinate the projections in all the theatres and on the dozens of screens throughout the building. It's like peering behind the Wizard of Oz's curtain.

The building succeeds most resoundingly in its streetfront presence, and the transparency of its functions to busy pedestrian and vehicular traffic on King Street. The opening up of this façade on the ground and second floors draws in the spectacle of street life, providing a striking contrast to the colourful and eclectic array of restaurants occupying the three-storey Victorian rowhouses across the street. The Lightbox beckons with wide expanses of glazing, offering views of the tantalizing wares for sale in the gift shop, and window displays promote current exhibitions in the Lightbox Gallery—*Tim Burton* is on show until mid-April. Most successful in an architectural, urbanistic and commercial sense is Canteen, the casual all-day eatery occupying the prime corner spot at King and John Streets. Its high ceilings, full-height glazing, bold graphics, and buzzy energy guarantee it being packed at virtually all hours of the day, from breakfast to dinner. It opens up this vital corner to the city—both metaphorically and literally with its summertime outdoor patio—drawing in both locals and tourists to enjoy its accessible and reasonably priced menu offerings.

Situated directly above Canteen and also owned and operated by the Oliver & Bonacini restaurant empire is Luma, a handsome room decked out in stone, walnut and leather that provides a sedate setting for a civilized lunch or dinner. It and the adjoining BlackBerry Lounge possess the same understated corporate elegance seen in KPMB's earlier restaurant project *Nota Bene*. A full wall of glazing ensures that both restaurant and lounge enjoy entertaining views of the animated streetscape day and night, and again, an outdoor terrace is open during warmer weather to allow customers to engage even further with the neighbourhood.

Interestingly, it's in these dining spaces where the architecture and interiors are permitted to sing; a greater variety of materials and textural contrast, along with effective signage and graphics, offers a degree of satis-

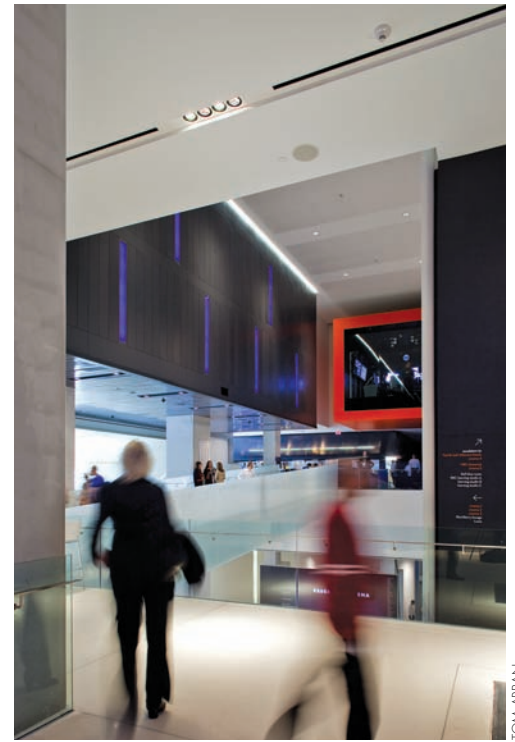
OPPOSITE TOP AN ATMOSPHERIC PHOTOGRAPH CAPTURES THE ENTIRETY OF THE BUILDING'S KING STREET FAÇADE. **OPPOSITE BOTTOM** THE SECOND-FLOOR BLACKBERRY LOUNGE ENTICES WITH A PLEASING MATERIAL PALETTE AND RELAXED VIBE. **TOP RIGHT** OCCUPYING PRIME REAL ESTATE AT THE BUSY CORNER OF KING AND JOHN, CASUAL EATERY CANTEEN IS PACKED FROM MORNING TO NIGHT WITH CUSTOMERS SEEKING ITS IRRESISTIBLY SPIRITED AMBIANCE AND A PLACE TO WATCH THE WORLD GO BY. **RIGHT** LUMA, THE RESTAURANT ON THE SECOND FLOOR, PROVIDES A SUITABLY SOPHISTICATED ENVIRONMENT FOR CIVILIZED DINING.



TOM ARBAN



TOM ARBAN

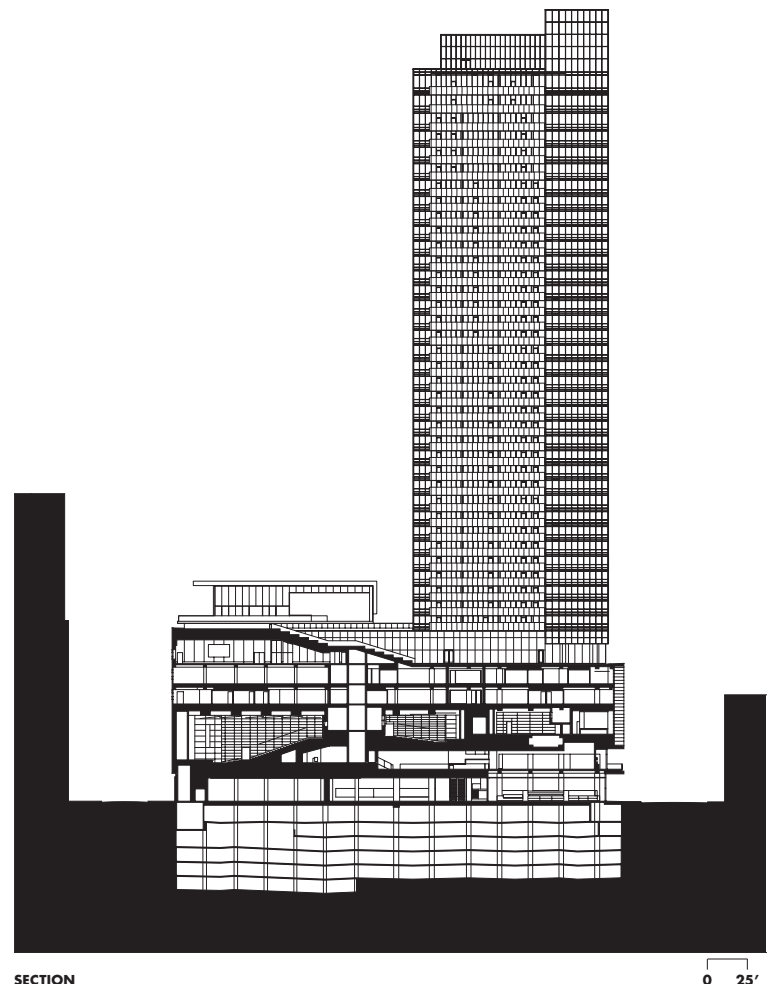


ABOVE, LEFT TO RIGHT EFFECTIVE SIGNAGE AND LIGHTING CREATES A HIGHLY APPEALING URBAN CORNER CONDITION AT KING AND JOHN STREETS; PEOPLE QUEUE FOR TICKETS IN THE THREE-STOREY ATRIUM OF THE LIGHTBOX; AN INTERNAL BRIDGE CROSSING THE ATRIUM ON THE SECOND FLOOR LEADS TO THE THREE MAJOR THEATRE SPACES; THE BUILDING SUCCESSFULLY ENGAGES WITH THE STREET THROUGH AMPLE TRANSPARENCY AND SIGNAGE.

faction that is perhaps less evident in other spaces in the complex, which can sometimes read as a bit flat with an overabundance of drywall and paint substituting for KPMB's usual sophisticated and subtle mélange of material, texture and colour. It's fairly obvious that budgetary shortfalls are to blame, as so often they are.

On the sixth floor, a room for private events and parties leads onto a magnificent outdoor space on the roof of the podium, revealing a grand stair whose form, according to Kuwabara, takes inspiration from the striking reverse pyramidal staircase of the iconic Villa Malaparte on the Isle of Capri. The villa was featured prominently in Jean-Luc Godard's film *Le Mépris* (1963), which Kuwabara describes as "visually stunning." The roof terrace and stair is no less stunning—one of the most successful moments in the Lightbox, with great potential for dramatic and filmic moments, offering spectacular views of the city. The stair also generates one of the most dynamic features of the front elevation—a boldly expressive stepped roofline of the complex's podium that echoes the gradient of the stair. However, it is unfortunate that access to this roof terrace is restricted to TIFF employees and their invited guests; it has all the features of a grand public space that ideally should be shared with the city and its residents.

The Lightbox is unquestionably a gift to the city of Toronto. Though criticisms have been made of its overwhelming scale, the reality of the city's evolution into a fully urban entity with a dense central core invariably means bigger and taller. Ambitious changes are taking place, and this most extraordinary project has formed an irresistible cultural, social and entertainment hub that engages the community in a manner rarely seen before in this town. Its September 2010 grand opening drew 10,000 visitors, and a few weeks later during Nuit Blanche, the Lightbox welcomed a steady stream of attendees all through the night to enjoy a compelling and entertaining program of short films. Kuwabara asserts that "a building acquires a life that unfolds over time." In the five short months since its unveiling, the Lightbox has not only acquired its own remarkable life, it's transformed so many others. **CA**



SECTION

0 25'



CLIENT TORONTO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, KING + JOHN FESTIVAL CORPORATION (C/O THE DANIELS CORPORATION)

ARCHITECT TEAM BRUCE KUWABARA, SHIRLEY BLUMBERG, LUIGI LAROCCA, MATTHEW WILSON, MATT KRIVOSUDSKY, BRUNO WEBER, BRENT WAGLER, GLENN MACMULLIN, ANDREA MACAROUN, RITA KIRIAKIS, ILLY IIAUKUS, CAROLYN LEE, DAVID POLOWAY, TYLER SHARP, DEBRA FABRICUS, CLAUDIO VENIER, THOM SETO, WALTER GAUDET, KRISTA CLARK, WINSTON CHONG, CARLA MUNOZ, ELIZABETH PADEN, BILL COLIACO, NICKO ELLIOT, NORM U

STRUCTURAL JABLONSKY, AST AND PARTNERS

MECHANICAL/ELECTRICAL SNC LAVALLIN - IKM

LIGHTING PIVOTAL LIGHTING AFFILIATED ENGINEERS

LIFE SAFETY LEBER RUBES INC.

ACOUSTICS AERCOUSTICS ENGINEERING LTD.

AUDIO-VISUAL WESTBURY NATIONAL SHOW SYSTEMS & AZCAR TECHNOLOGIES

THEATRE CONSULTANT PETER SMITH ARCHITECT INC.

SIGNAGE GOTTSCHALK + ASH

WIND STUDY RWDI ENGINEERING

TRANSPORTATION MARSHALL MACKLIN MONAGHAN

FOOD SERVICE KAIZEN FOODSERVICE PLANNING AND DESIGN INC.

SECURITY MULVEY AND BANANI

IT EHVERT ENGINEERING

COSTING HELYAR & ASSOCIATES

CONTRACTOR PCL CONSTRUCTORS CANADA INC.

AREA 175,000 FT² BASE; 372,000 FT² CONDO

BUDGET WITHHELD

COMPLETION SEPTEMBER 2010



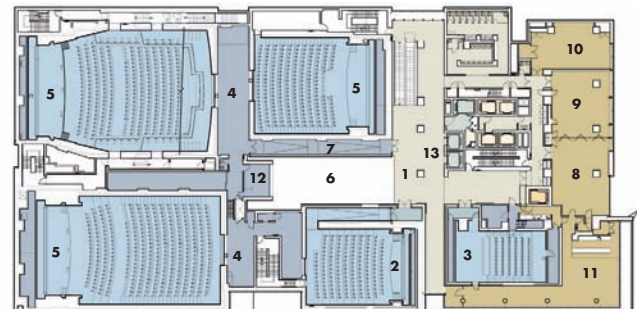
FIFTH FLOOR

- | | |
|----------------|-------------------|
| 1 WAITING AREA | 4 PROJECTION ROOM |
| 2 BOARD ROOM | 5 SCREENING ROOM |
| 3 LOUNGE | 6 BALCONY |



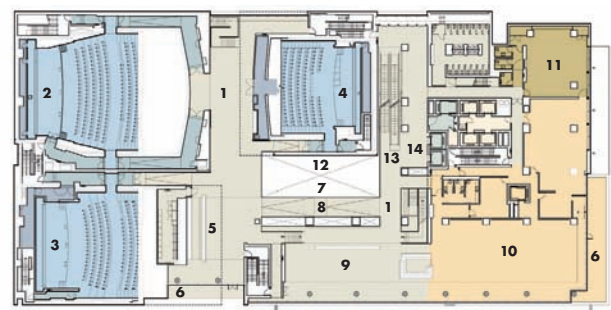
FOURTH FLOOR

- | | | |
|--|----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 FILM REFERENCE COLLECTION, RECEPTION & GALLERY | 5 HOLDING/PROCESSING | 10 VOLUNTEERS' LOUNGE |
| 2 A/V STATIONS | 6 COPY ROOM | 11 STAFF LOUNGE |
| 3 RESEARCH ROOM | 7 STORAGE ROOM | 12 LARGE MEETING ROOM |
| 4 COMPACT SHELVING | 8 TAPE STORAGE | |
| | 9 RECEPTION | |



THIRD FLOOR

- | | | |
|-------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| 1 LOBBY | 6 ATRIUM | 11 MEMBERS' LOUNGE |
| 2 THEATRE 4 | 7 LINK | 12 MASTER CONTROL |
| 3 THEATRE 5 | 8 LEARNING STUDIO A | 13 ELEVATORS |
| 4 PROJECTION ROOM | 9 LEARNING STUDIO B | |
| 5 THEATRE BELOW | 10 LEARNING STUDIO C | |



SECOND FLOOR

- | | | |
|--------------|---------------------|----------------|
| 1 LOBBY | 6 TERRACE | 11 GREEN ROOM |
| 2 THEATRE 1 | 7 ATRIUM | 12 SCREEN WALL |
| 3 THEATRE 2 | 8 BRIDGE | 13 ESCALATORS |
| 4 THEATRE 3 | 9 BLACKBERRY LOUNGE | 14 ELEVATORS |
| 5 CONCESSION | 10 IUMA | |



GROUND FLOOR AND SITE PLAN

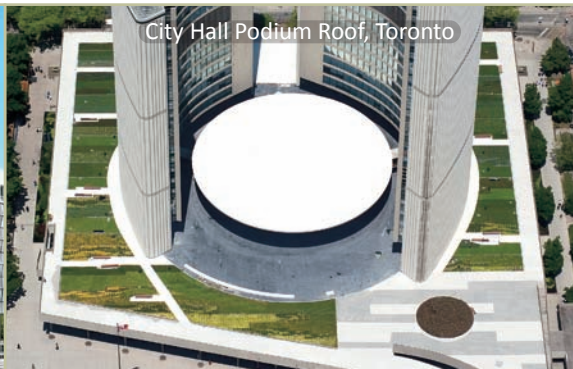
- | | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 MAIN ENTRY | 7 STAGING PREP | 13 TIFF SWING SPACE |
| 2 LOBBY | 8 CONDO ENTRY | 14 SW FRONTAGE |
| 3 TIFF ELEVATOR LOBBY | 9 CONDO LOBBY | 15 ESCALATORS |
| 4 BOX OFFICE | 10 CONDO ELEVATOR LOBBY | 16 MAIN FLOOR STAIRCASE |
| 5 COAT CHECK | 11 CONDO DROP-OFF | |
| 6 GALLERY | 12 GIFT SHOP | |

Building Envelope Solutions From Coast to Coast

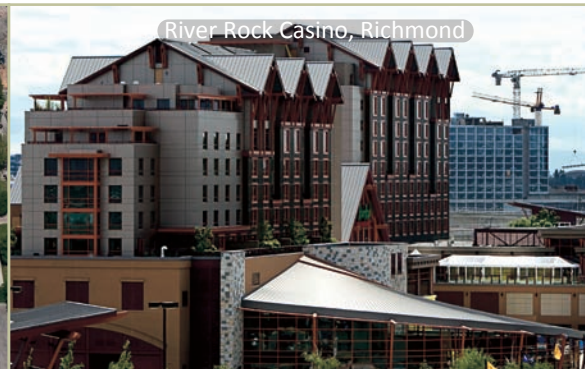
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Art Gallery of Alberta, Edmonton



City Hall Podium Roof, Toronto



River Rock Casino, Richmond



Maple Leaf Square Podium, Toronto

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A DESERT FLOWERS

THE MIRACULOUS RECLAMATION AND REHABILITATION OF THE WADI HANIFAH RIVER VALLEY IN SAUDI ARABIA IS EXPLAINED.



ARRIYADH DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

PROJECT WADI HANIFAH RESTORATION PROJECT, RIYADH, KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS MORIYAMA & TESHIMA PLANNERS IN JOINT VENTURE WITH BURO HAPPOLD
TEXT ELSA IAM
PHOTOS ARRIYADH DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY, GEORGE STOCKTON

Inside the intimate lobby of Moriyama & Teshima's offices on the edge of the upscale Rosedale neighbourhood in downtown Toronto, visitors cross a stone bridge over a shallow pool that contains a dozen swishing koi fish. The sound of trickling water carries down the hall to a boardroom adorned with a horizontal tapestry that resembles abstract waves from a flowing stream.

The décor is fitting for an office that's starting to see the fruits of a decade spent on a project centred on water. In November of 2010, Moriyama & Teshima Planners (MTP)—the landscape design branch of the firm—garnered a well-deserved Aga Khan Award for Architecture for their restoration of the Wadi Hanifah, a river valley in

Saudi Arabia. The prestigious prize recognizes ecological and restoration-minded work in the Islamic world. With a site 120 kilometres long, and additional work extending through a 4,032-square-kilometre catchment basin, it's the largest project that MTP has taken on since its inception as an affiliate to the architecture firm 30 years ago.

The once lush Wadi Hanifah—literally the Hanifah Valley—runs from sand dune-covered desert, through agricultural lands and palm groves, before crossing the Saudi Kingdom's largest metropolis, the city of Riyadh. Some of the city's senior citizens remember playing in the Wadi Hanifah as children. That was back when Riyadh was a relatively small town—in 1952, it had 80,000 residents. Since that time, it's developed in leaps and bounds, more than doubling its population every decade. Today, 7 million people call Riyadh home.

As the city expanded, it used the Hanifah Valley as a thoroughway for utility lines and a dumping ground for construction waste. The river that

ABOVE AN IMAGE ILLUSTRATING A FEW OF THE DOZENS OF BIO-REMEDIATION CELLS THAT CONSTITUTE THIS INTENSIVE RESTORATION PROJECT TRANSFORMING A POLLUTED RIVER INTO A VIBRANT ASSET FOR RIYADH.

carved out the valley had centuries ago been diverted into an underground aquifer, remaining easily tapped for fresh water. Now, a new kind of waterway has made its way through the Wadi Hanifah—a foul stream of industrial effluent from a tannery on the outskirts of town, and discharge from the city's overcapacity sewage treatment plant. "It had become Riyadh's sewer and dump," summarizes MTP president George Stockton.

Stockton is no stranger to the region. MTP worked hand in hand with Moriyama & Teshima Architects on the National Museum of Saudi Arabia, developing the urban design and landscaping for the 83-acre site in Riyadh, which opened in 1999. That year, Stockton was asked to participate in a three-week charrette on the future of



WAEEL SAMHOURI

the city. He focused on open space and the environment. “I identified the Wadi as the opportunity,” he recalls. His paper on the subject became the terms of reference for the project, headed by the Arriyadh Development Authority (ADA). In partnership with UK engineering firm Buro Happold, MTP won a proposal to redevelop the Wadi Hanifah. At MTP, Stockton and landscape architect Drew Wensley headed up the project. Soon after the master plan was completed, the team was commissioned to develop detailed designs, and on the heels of that phase, the first pilot projects.

The central idea in Stockton and Wensley’s vision was to use native plants and natural processes to restore the riverbed. They proposed re-greening the valley with indigenous flora that would mitigate the area’s violent flash floods while doubling as the basis for naturalized parks. Then, they envisaged cleaning the urban wastewater stream to a level where it could provide public amenity within those parks.

Before construction could begin, the riverbed needed to be cleared: a step where working in a nation with top-down governance proved a precious asset. The tannery that poured hazardous

chromium down the Wadi was shut down in two days. Utilities including water mains, sewage spur lines, overhead phone wires, power cables, and irrigation pipes were relocated. 1.5 million cubic metres of debris—a volume equal to the Toronto SkyDome (now the Rogers Centre)—was removed from the riverbed, comprised of everything from construction waste to dead animals.

Once the area was cleared, the team built stone walls along the edges of the Wadi to set it off from private property, and began revegetating the ancient riverbed with the indigenous species that had once inhabited it. The ADA and its contractors collected seeds and cuttings from the least damaged parts of the valley, and used them to propagate thousands of trees, shrubs, and grasses in greenhouses. “All of these plants have incredible strategies for survival in hot, low-water conditions,” explains Stockton. Moreover, the selected species would help temper the Wadi’s periodic floods, which have worsened with the asphalt sprawl of urban development. “The shrubs and plant material that are genetically intrinsic to the Wadi would have slowed down flood flows historically,” reasons Wensley, noting that over millennia, these plants adapted to absorb rapidly

ABOVE A SERIES OF NATURAL STONE WEIRS WERE CONSTRUCTED TO INTRODUCE OXYGEN INTO THE WATER AS IT PASSES OVER AND THROUGH THEM, THEREBY REDUCING THE AMOUNT OF POLLUTION IN THE WADI.

moving floodwaters and retain sediments.

The use of native flora was not without controversy, since the locals viewed them as weeds. Although the plan to employ indigenous species was laid out early on, the ADA remained concerned about whether the public would use a naturalized system, as opposed to a series of formal parks. Yet Stockton and Wensley resisted the pressure to bring in imported plants, which would have required constant care and irrigation. To justify their decision, they tapped their landscape design skills to showcase the beauty they readily perceived in native grasses, by massing them together and highlighting them in composed groups. “It became like a garden,” says Wensley.

The team arranged the new plants in thousands of clusters called planting cells, designed in over 150 different shapes and species groupings, according to both aesthetic criteria and the varying

conditions along the Wadi Hanifah. Interspersed along a 70-kilometre stretch of the Wadi, the cells acted as miniature plant nurseries, and within three years had begun to grow out to meet each other, as well as spreading seeds downstream. Now, a textured green carpet is starting to cover the valley floor. The restored habitat attracts huge numbers of birds, along with small mammals and some reptiles—like the foot-and-a-half-long lizard that greeted Stockton on a recent visit.

A new road running the length of the Wadi allows for easy access to park areas designed by the team. In some sections, simple limestone walls delineate picnic areas and provide families with visual privacy. Other areas are left open as play fields for children. A recreational path used for jogging and walking runs along the edge of the riverbed. Along select sections, palm-lined promenades add to the oasis-like feel of the valley.

Meanwhile, in the urban core of Riyadh, the team sought to transform the discharge from the municipal sewage treatment plant—technically greywater, but which often approached blackwater—into something beautiful. This strategy had two phases. The first was to divert part of the plant's effluent through a man-made channel, lined with loose rock and equipped with waterfalls that help to introduce oxygen and mix the water column. The size of the rocks was calibrated to maximize the quantities of aquatic organisms that could live in the channel bed and digest organic material from the wastewater.

The channel leads to the main bio-remediation facility: a large-scale open-air living machine that, from the air, looks like a family of three fossil trilobites. Water enters from the top of the facility—the tail end of the baby trilobite—and makes its way through herringbone channels, or bio-cells, in each of the three successive systems.

A series of operations progressively cleans the water. At the mouth of the facility, powerful air pumps blast dissolved oxygen into the water, creating an environment lethal to coliform bacteria. Each bio-cell's front compartment houses a 3-D layered textile mat—a vast, cave-like maze on which colonies of algae and other micro-fauna thrive, digesting nutrients from the water. Finally, tilapia feast on the algae. Recent autopsies have shown the fish to be in perfect health, with no toxins or parasites. By the time the water exits, it's clear through to the bottom—making the fish easy to spot for opportunistic herons, egrets and hawks that have begun to nest in the area.

The success of the facility has been astounding. As Stockton describes, “it came alive in just a few months rather than a whole year, which is what we were anticipating.” The water that emerges doesn't smell, and is close to 100 percent clear of coliform and suspended solids. Although it's not drinking calibre, further treatment could render

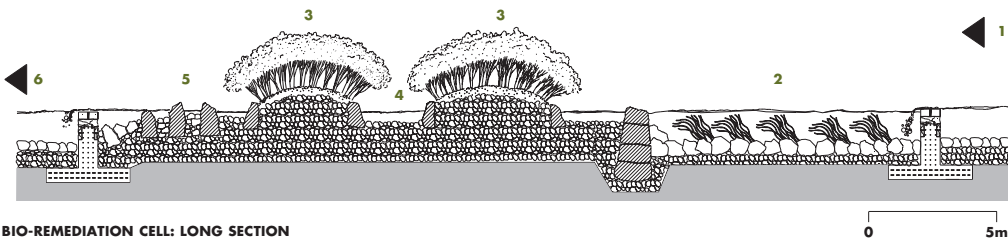


WAEI SAWHOURI



RIYADH DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

TOP THE HERITAGE VALUE OF THE OLD DAM HAS BEEN INCREASED AS A RESULT OF RESTORING THE WADI HANIFAH RIVER SYSTEM. **ABOVE** THE PARK SYSTEM IS DESIGNED TO PROVIDE FAMILY COMPARTMENTS—IN THE FORM OF SEMI-ENCLOSED AREAS—SO THAT EACH FAMILY CAN USE THE PARK FOR THE DAY WITHOUT BEING DISTURBED BY OTHERS.



BIO-REMEDIATION CELL: LONG SECTION

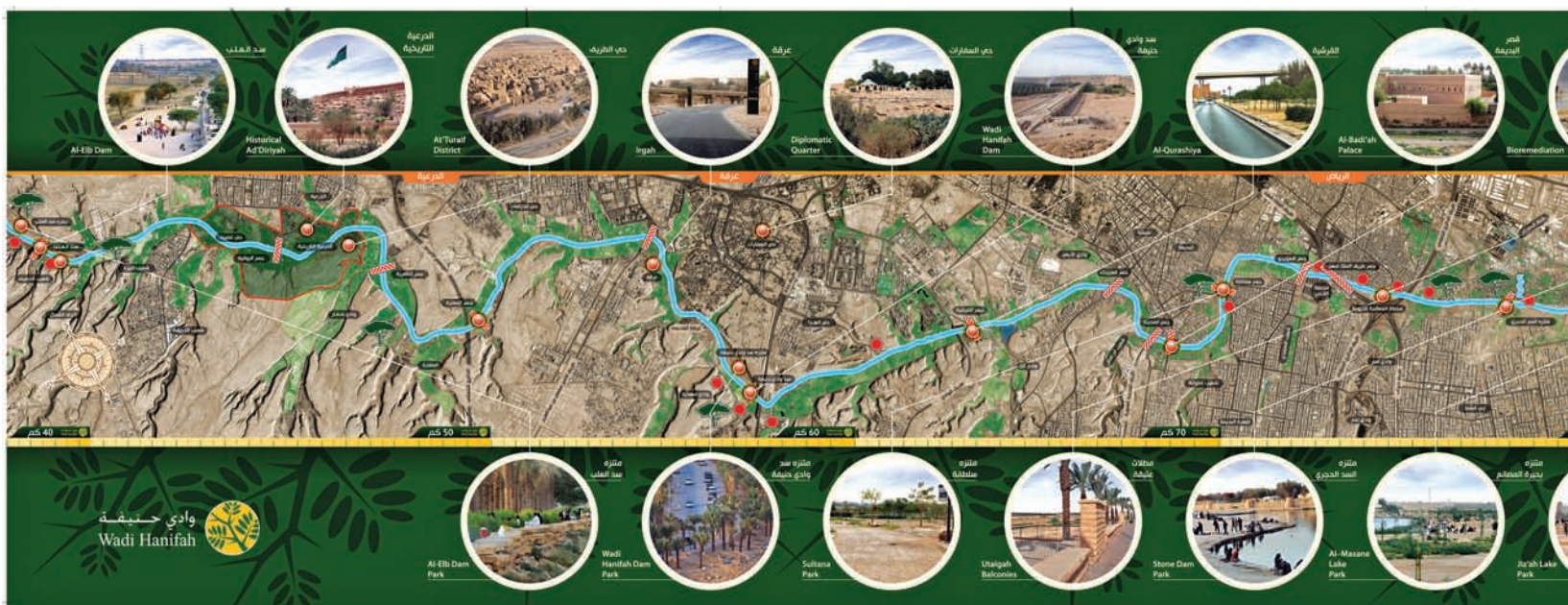
- 1 INFLOW CHANNEL
- 2 RETENTION POOL: FISH/AMPHIBIAN HABITAT
- 3 HIGH MARSH: AQUATIC/TERRESTRIAL FOOD CHAIN HABITAT
- 4 LOW MARSH: AQUATIC FOOD CHAIN HABITAT
- 5 SMALL AQUATIC ORGANISM ENVIRONMENT TO ABSORB NUTRIENTS AND CONSUME BACTERIA
- 6 OUTFLOW CHANNEL

it so. The remediated wastewater—350,000 cubic metres of it each day—is especially precious in a city that normally relies on desalinated seawater, a costly and energy-intensive source. Aside from four air blowers, the Wadi facility uses no machinery, and its capital cost was a third of a conventional wastewater treatment plant.

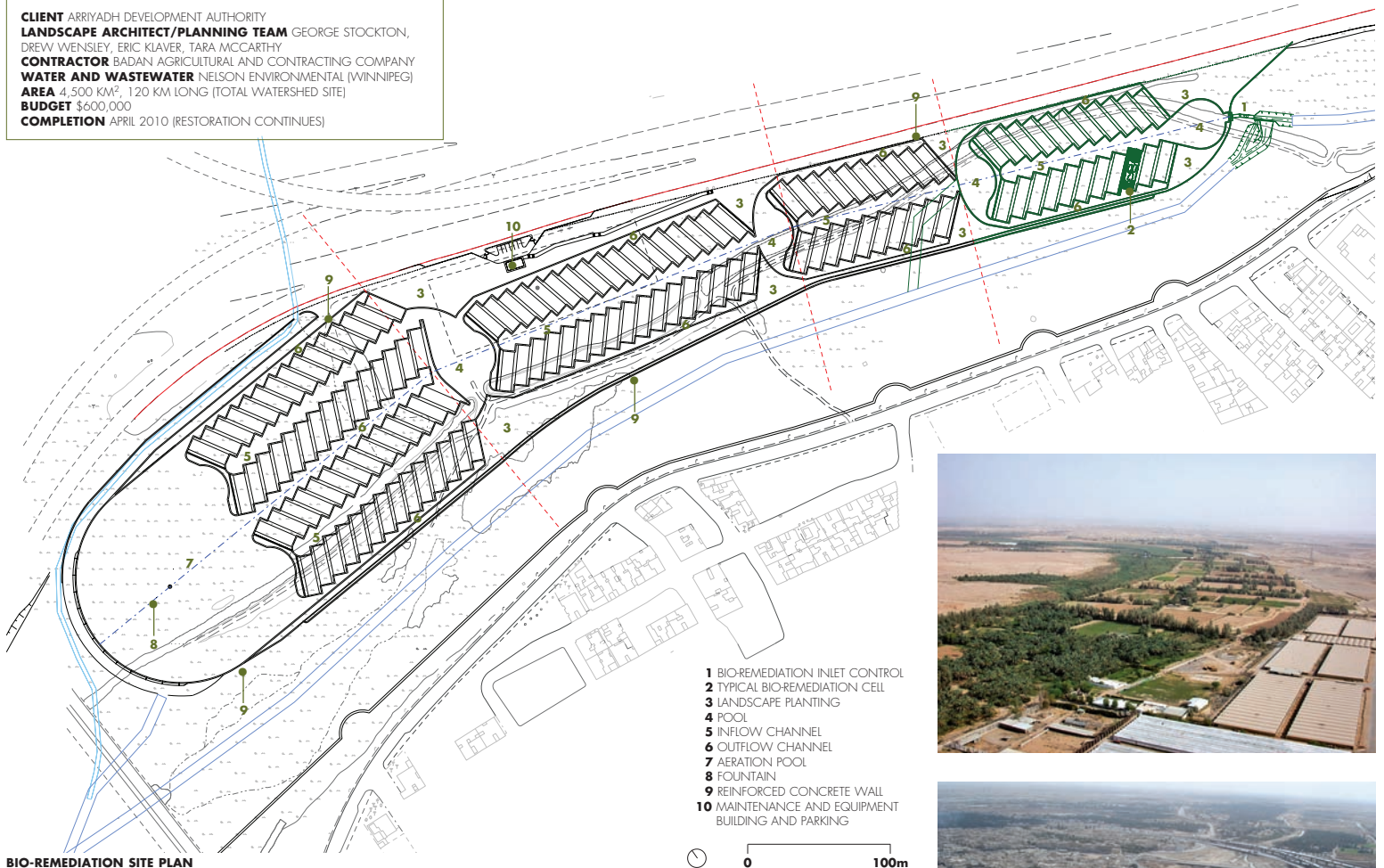
Instead of being immediately extracted as recycled greywater for the city, the remediated water is allowed to flow for another 28 kilometres, becoming the lifeblood of a new series of urban parks. In one area, the water snakes over the rock outcroppings from a 500-year-old stone dam. Cut-stone steps ending in a gravel beach reach out into the water. Downstream, the water pools into a string of artificial lakes, stocked for fishing with surplus tilapia from the bio-remediation facility. “It’s a very unique experience to have open bodies of water within the desert environment,” affirms Wensley. Riyadh’s public agrees—they began picnicking in the Wadi while it was under construction, and now patronize the parks by the tens of thousands each weekend.

While the Wadi Hanifah has shown remarkable progress, for MTP, this is just the beginning. Remediation of additional effluent from the municipal plant continues, and another series of parks is under construction, connecting side valleys into the main Wadi system. They’re also working on establishing a Wadi Hanifah Directorate that would ensure the ongoing protection, management and enhancement of the river valley. An educational centre and program are another critical component. “This project will probably still be under construction in a hundred years,

TOP LEFT AN AERIAL PHOTO ILLUSTRATES THE OVERALL SYSTEM OF BIO-REMEDIATION CELLS THAT IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE SUBSTANTIAL CLEANSING OF THE WADI HANIFAH.



CLIENT ARRIYADH DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT/PLANNING TEAM GEORGE STOCKTON,
 DREW WENSLEY, ERIC KLAVER, TARA MCCARTHY
CONTRACTOR BADAN AGRICULTURAL AND CONTRACTING COMPANY
WATER AND WASTEWATER NELSON ENVIRONMENTAL (WINNIPEG)
AREA 4,500 KM², 120 KM LONG (TOTAL WATERSHED SITE)
BUDGET \$600,000
COMPLETION APRIL 2010 (RESTORATION CONTINUES)



BIO-REMEDIATION SITE PLAN

there's just so much to do," opines Stockton.

"It's got enough scope to evolve, and respond to new needs, and that's the hallmark of a very good project."

Meanwhile, the firm is at work on master plans for Mecca and Medina—Saudi cities that also have sick watersheds—and their approach is garnering international interest. Wensley has been asked to present the Wadi Hanifah twice at the United

RIGHT, TOP TO BOTTOM AN AERIAL VIEW OF WADI HANIFAH; THE CLOSE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE RESTORED RIVER SYSTEM AND THE ADJACENT HIGHWAY INFRASTRUCTURE; LOCALS CAN NOW SAFELY ENJOY A DAY-LONG PICNIC; MEN RELAXING NEAR THE CENTRAL POOL AND WATER RETENTION AREA.



Nations, and the firm is excited about applying the process and lessons they've learned to situations elsewhere. The bio-remediation facility in particular—built with basic materials and unskilled labour—holds enormous potential as an adaptable tool for tackling the globally ubiquitous problem of urban wastewater.

At its core, the success of the project and its future potential is a quintessentially Canadian story, built on strong experience with diverse natural environments and cultures at home, and a long-term, consensus-building approach. "Canadian consultants can go to challenging areas around the world, and with the right attitudes and eyes wide open, do superb work," concludes Stockton. "Better than almost anybody else." **CA**

Elsa Lam is a freelance writer and scholar. She studied architecture at the University of Waterloo and McGill, and is completing a PhD in architecture and landscape history at Columbia University.



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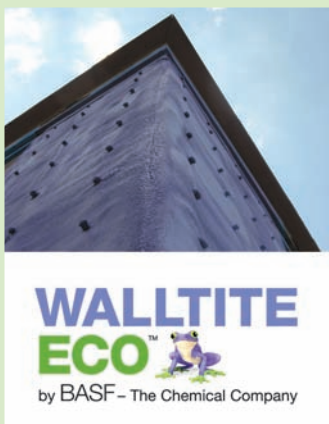
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CALENDAR

Tailoring Form: A Brief Look at the Anonymous History of the Template

January 29-March 3, 2011 This exhibition by Natalie Fizer and Glenn Forley of Fizer Forley in New York City takes place at the Eric Arthur Gallery in the John H. Daniels Faculty of Architecture, Landscape and Design at the University of Toronto. The templates in this exhibition, culled from a range of industries and professions—shipbuilding, automobile design, navigation, architecture, and fashion—register shifts in the standardization of production and representation.

www.daniels.utoronto.ca

WE: Vancouver—12 Manifestos for the City

February 12-May 1, 2011 An exhibition at the Vancouver Art Gallery celebrates the innovation and diversity found in the city by bringing together more than 45 projects from various disciplines—architecture

and design, art and visual culture, literature and activism.

www.vanartgallery.ca

Contemporary Spaces for Teaching and Learning

February 21, 2011 Andrew Harrison of Space that Works, Peter Clegg of Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios, Nick Sully and Alec Smith of SHAPE Architecture, and Derek Lee of the PWL Partnership will lecture at 6:30pm in Room 100 of the Mathematics Building at UBC in Vancouver.

IDC/IIDA Leaders' Breakfast

February 24, 2011 More than 300 interior designers, architects, media, government representatives, and some of BC's most influential business leaders will attend this morning event at the Vancouver Convention Centre.

www.idcanada.org

Drura Parrish lecture

February 24, 2011 Drura Parrish of the

University of Kentucky's College of Design speaks at 7:00pm at the Uptown Stage and Screen in Calgary.

www.evds.ucalgary.ca

Todd Saunders: Recent Works

March 1, 2011 Todd Saunders of Saunders Architecture in Norway delivers this lecture at 6:30pm at the Daniels Faculty of Architecture, Landscape and Design at the University of Toronto.

High Performance and Sustainable Building Summit

March 1-2, 2011 Taking place at the Hilton Garden Inn Toronto Airport, the High Performance and Sustainable Buildings Summit brings together leaders from around the world to share innovative strategies on greening old and new buildings. This year's summit will provide an exceptional learning opportunity for industry leaders to better manage their sustainable building projects and refine their professional exper-

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Larry Beasley lecture

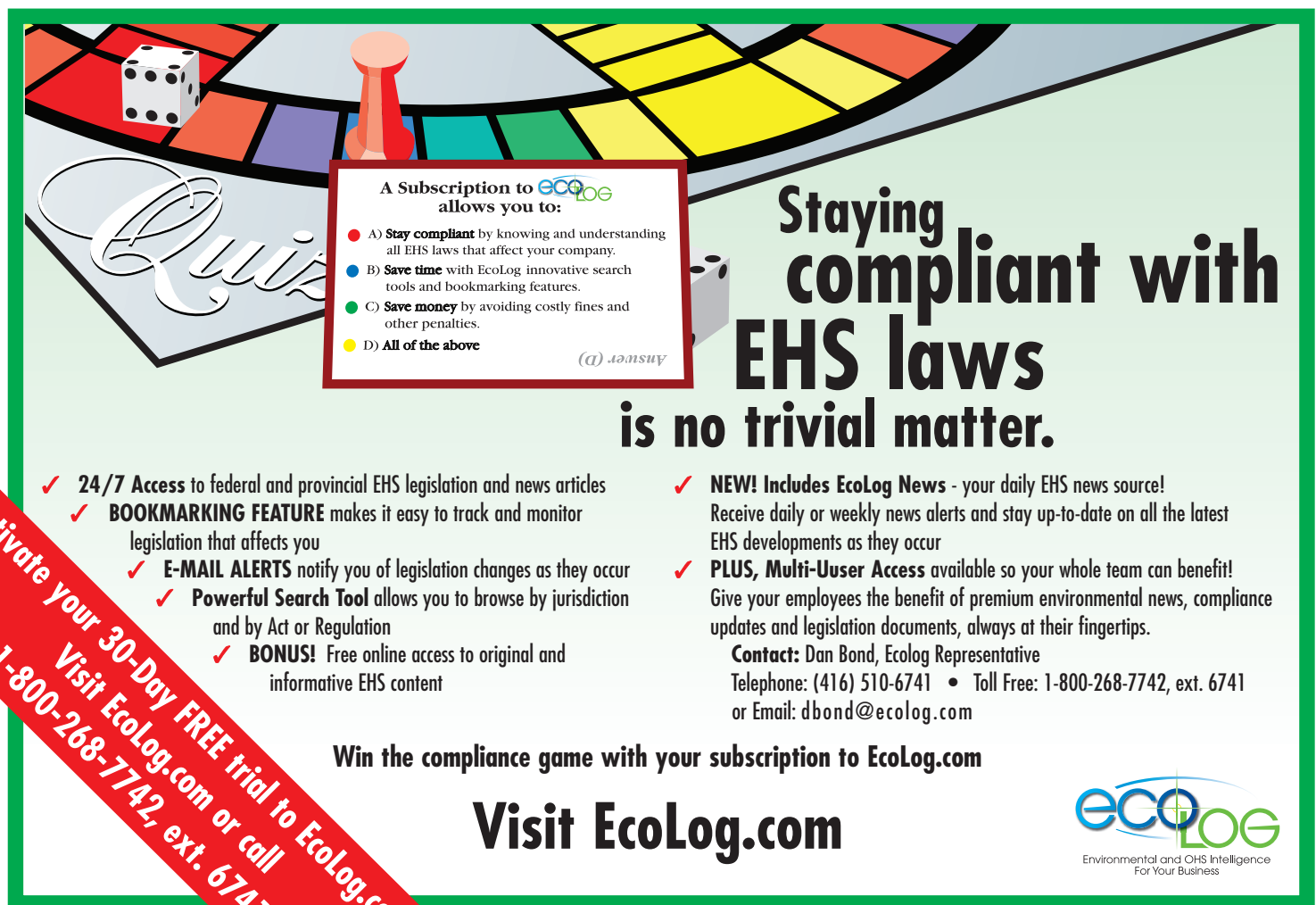
March 2, 2011 Larry Beasley, former Director of Planning for the City of Vancouver, delivers a lecture at 6:00pm at the National Gallery of Canada in Ottawa.

Arcadian Urbanism

March 3, 2011 Jerry van Eyck, principal of !melk in New York, delivers the Cornelia Hahn-Webb lecture at 6:00pm at UBC Robson Square in Vancouver.

Sustaining Beauties 2.0, Aesthetics as an Ecosystem Service

March 8, 2011 Elizabeth Meyer of the University of Virginia School of Architecture delivers this lecture at 6:30pm at the Daniels Faculty of Architecture, Landscape and Design at the University of Toronto.



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March 8, 2011 Michael Maltzan, principal of Michael Maltzan Architecture in Los Angeles, delivers this lecture at 6:00pm at UBC Robson Square in Vancouver.

Homa Farjadi lecture

March 14, 2011 Homa Farjadi, professor and principal of Farjadi Architects in London, delivers a lecture at 6:00pm at the National Gallery of Canada in Ottawa.

Barbara Imhof: Architecture Beyond the Earth's Horizon

March 14, 2011 This lecture by Barbara Imhof of Vienna's Liquifer Systems Group takes place at 6:00pm in Room G10 of the Macdonald-Harrington Building at McGill University.

Daoust Lestage—From the City to the Object

March 15, 2011 Renée Daoust of Daoust Lestage Inc. in Montreal de-

livers this lecture at 6:30pm at the Daniels Faculty of Architecture, Landscape and Design at the University of Toronto.

Marjan Eggermont lecture

March 17, 2011 Marjan Eggermont, artist and instructor at the Schulich School of Engineering speaks at 7:00pm at the Uptown Stage and Screen in Calgary.
www.evds.ucalgary.ca

Why Manhattan is the Greenest City in North America

March 17, 2011 New York-based David Owen, staff writer at *The New Yorker* and author of *Green Metropolis*, delivers this lecture at 8:00pm at the Playhouse Theatre in Vancouver.

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Mirvish sold his wares with a barrage of loud neon signs, a carnival atmosphere, witty slogans, and corny jokes—often at his own expense. As a communication tool, the visual style is “funhouse”—loud, colourful, an approach that is “of the people.”

No other brand identity is so visually distilled, prevalent and easy to use as Honest Ed's ubiquitous hand-painted signs or “point-of-sale show cards,” as the in-house painters call it. The iconography is all Ed. No Madison Avenue marketing here. Ed's manner and shtick is old-fashioned



LEFT ONE OF THE THOUSANDS OF HAND-PAINTED SIGNS THAT HAVE BEEN USED FOR DECADES TO PROMOTE FEATURE ITEMS ON SALE AT HONEST ED'S. ABOVE USING AN OLD-FASHIONED APPROACH TO MERCHANDISING, MASS DISPLAY AND SIGNAGE HAS DEFINED THIS TORONTO INSTITUTION SINCE 1948.

populism and salesmanship. The typographical shtick has traditionally been expressed through a distinct style of hand-painted tempera signs, decked out in primary colours with gorgeous swirling typography. The signs are busy and fast, while telling you in a not so subtle way to come in, buy, and get out!

In its heyday, Mirvish employed an army of painters working at a hectic pace to produce the thousands of hand-painted signs assigned to each individual product. Today only two painters remain: Doug Kerr and Wayne Reuben. Reuben says that the style of the signs was developed over time and passed on through apprentices just like him. Reuben was raw talent when he started in 1967; the old-timers taught him from the ground up. He came into his own by developing a star symbol that finishes all of his work. He says, “It was something that I picked. I drew them to fill in the space and it became my trademark.” Kerr says the “casual style” of the signs is a form of freehand style that you “slash” out. “Everyone has a casual style, but no two are ever the same and there are always idiosyncrasies,” he admits.

Kerr and Reuben are what remain of a long-established tradition of the hand-painted-sign industry in Canada. And Honest Ed's is one of the last remaining retail institutions to employ painters who can generate merchandising, wayfinding and information design.

Ed Mirvish passed away in 2007, yet he is everywhere. The hand-painted confections found at Honest Ed's are a delightful anachronism disconnected from our contemporary digital world. These iconic signs awaken the child in us; they speak to us and about us. And as long as they remain, we will always have Honest Ed's telling us to “buy, buy, buy!” **CA**

John Martins-Manteiga is the director of Dominion Modern and the author of Peter Dickinson. His new book Métro focuses on the Montreal subway, and is due to be released soon.

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